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"FOREST CONDITIONS" IN SHELTERBELTS

- By D. S. Olson

We have all used this expression quite commonly although perhaps vaguely in our planting work here in the Plains. As a matter of fact we have been largely depending upon the establishment of forest conditions in the shelterbelts to assure the future success of this work, but what is it? Agriculturists and foresters see eye-to-eye in many of the fundamentals involved in our common problems, but we're both speaking a different language and failing to understand each other. What does "forest condition" mean in the agricultural language?

There is, let us say, an annual precipitation of 24 inches in a given locality of the shelterbelt zone. That is enough moisture to satisfy almost any farmer or forester if it were all available to the crop, but most of it is lost. For example, on a given area of medium-textured, fallowed soil on nearly level ground we would have distribution of moisture approximately as follows:

13.5%	is run-off
31.3%	comes in showers too light to be effective
37.2%	evaporates
82.0%	is lost to crop
18.0%	or about 6 inches gets into the soil

This is sufficient for a wheat crop, not enough for a corn crop, and allows a very slim margin for starting a tree crop. That is why growing of crops (including trees) in this region is so hazardous and any slight adjustment made to improve or diminish that scanty margin of moisture available to the crop spells success or failure.

While our shelterbelts are a few years old they are like other row crops, dependent upon that small margin of moisture, and like the annual farm crops subject to failure when that available moisture is below the minimum requirements.

However, when the crowns come together and shade out competitive weeds in lieu of cultivation, when a litter of fallen leaves and twigs forms a spongy duff to better receive moisture and retard run-off, and when this duff mulches the ground and the protective canopy of foliage above and at the sides shuts off evaporation; in other words, when the shelterbelt has "forest conditions," then the moisture situation becomes entirely changed. The trees have now saved for themselves all of the 13.2% previously lost in run-off and most of 37.2% that previously evaporated from the exposed ground. They have made available for themselves about 12 additional inches of moisture so that instead of working on a scant margin within 6 inches they have 18 inches. The comparatively small amount lost by interception of the crowns is largely represented in "showers too light to be effective."

Many of our belts have now passed through that stage where they must depend solely upon that 20% of current rainfall in order to survive. They will continue to use up all that they have saved and reflect that in greater tree growth, but they will have a greater margin to work with. Eventually the stands will again reach a point where the "drain" of too much tree growth will pull down this margin of safety, but when that becomes evident through stagnation of growth we can help things along by judicious liberation cuttings that will reduce root competition but at the same time maintain a closed canopy to preserve forest conditions and the 12 inches of moisture otherwise likely to be lost to the trees.

In the North, where snow is an important contributor of moisture, the trees may benefit by more than the normal or average precipitation, through accumulation of deep snowdrifts held within the shelterbelts. The ratio of run-off and evaporation in this accumulated extra moisture is likewise reduced by forest conditions and even a greater margin of moisture made available for the trees.

SHELTERBELT BIDS FAIR TO BECOME A COOPERATOR

It is with regret that I leave the family of Forest Service people with whom I have had such pleasant and profitable associations during the past five years. It is not anticipated that any future years of my life will be spent among more agreeable folks.

My business will be cattle for a spell now. My ranch is located in Loup County, Nebraska, 20 miles north of the town of Taylor on U. S. Highway No. 83. I'll be expecting all of you to stop with me any time you are in that country. My 7,000 acres will be space enough to pitch several tents if the house won't hold you.

Regards to all of you,

"y hasta la vista,"

Al Briggs

P.S. I'll use more shelterbelts if you'll use more beef.--A.H.B.

(Ed's Note: That's Al's swan song as he leaves the Forest Service for cattle ranching. He'll use up his accumulated leave about the middle of June and then his resignation will take effect. Strange, but Al insists he'll be "batching." The Regional Office girls did their best to make him comfortable with a regular girl's kitchen shower at the Stamper home. We understand the party was a complete surprise and only Al's natural suavity averted a complete rout. The girls had a good time, and so did Al.)

"LONGITUDINAL ENVIRONMENT" IN SURVIVAL RECORDS

We were very much interested in the Summary of Survivals in 1939 shelterbelts, a copy of which we received some time ago.

These data have undoubtedly been scanned closely and much valuable information extracted therefrom. However in the "Analysis of Loss" we believe that at least one important intangible factor was omitted, although it may have been included partly under "Technical Faults" and "Drouth." We shall call this factor "Longitudinal Environment."

As a rule we should expect better survival in our eastern Districts than in our western Districts. This is because of more humid climatic conditions (greater rainfall and less evaporation).

In checking the survivals this held true with 1939 plantings with several exceptions (notably the Texas High Plains District). North Dakota's survivals from east to west varied from 77 to 67; South Dakota's, 77 to 62; Nebraska, 71 to 50; Kansas, 79 to 49; Oklahoma, 82 to 58; Texas, 70 to 87. We are not familiar with all of the Project's Districts and took the Districts to be either east or west according to the District headquarters, in most cases, so all of the above data may not be exactly correct.

This definite trend shows that as a rule the further east, the better the planting survival. The further west, the poorer the survival.

Thus we find differences of 10%, 15%, 21%, 30% and 24% in survivals of the various states (excluding Texas) from the eastern to the western extremities. This means that there was an average of 20% difference of survival between the extremities. Since this trend holds true throughout five of the states it does not seem to me that it can be properly charged to any of the factors under "Analysis of Loss," but is due to some factor that we have not yet considered.

In the survival report, losses are charged to small stock, cultivation, technical faults, insects, etc. The fact that shelterbelts are being planted under generally more rigorous conditions in the west is apparently disregarded. We realize, of course, that "errors" committed under western conditions may be fatal, while under eastern conditions the same errors still might enable us to obtain a good survival, due to generally favorable climatic conditions. Under these conditions the errors might possibly be justly charged to factors listed under "Analysis of Loss." On the other extreme, if we planted trees in the Sahara Desert we could not fairly charge losses to the items under "Analysis of Loss," as other factors would enter.

With this in mind I wonder if a certain percent of our failures of 1939 should not be charged to "Longitudinal Environment" rather than scatter the blame on our standard villains - drouth, insects, technical faults, small stock, etc., all of which may be contributing factors to "Longitudinal Environment."

- Karl F. Ziegler, Kans.

The quality of service to a large degree depends upon the employee's realizing the value of good service and its effect on future operations.

- Carroll C. Deal, Okla.

HUNTING PROGRAM GETS RESULTS

South Dakota's community hunting program for the season 1939-40 has nearly reached completion. Two hundred and forty-eight hunts have already been "put away" and with a few scattered hunts remaining to be reported we expect the season's total to reach more than 250.

Accurate data and information concerning the hunts have been periodically recorded and are submitted as follows:

Number of hunts, 248; number acres covered, 1,603,240; number of participants, 15,896; number F. S. trucks used, 418; number private trucks used, 450; number rabbits killed, 57,903; number fox killed, 87; number coyotes killed, 21; number shells used, 55,984; amount of proceeds, \$8,105.11.

A great many organizations sponsored hunts. These organizations have been placed in their proper category as follows:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Number of hunts held</u>	<u>Number of participants</u>	<u>Amount of proceeds</u>
Farm Union Locals	60	3,739	\$ 1,846.84
Churches: (Church Body)	38	2,134	1,400.38
A - Ladies Aids	26	1,529	717.73
B - Men's organizations	5	322	123.74
C - Sunday schools	5	279	242.12
American Legions	31	2,383	965.05
Clubs:			
A - Community	5	572	126.60
B - 4-H	6	219	116.61
C - Gun	19	1,483	821.50
D - Baseball	9	498	351.24
E - Civic	7	275	111.14
F - Golf	3	118	101.82
G - Extension	1	26	15.50
H - Townsend	1	25	16.20
I - Conservation	1	230	35.50
Firemen	6	603	253.27
Lodges:			
A - IOOF	2	99	45.69
B - Masonic	3	163	118.52
C - Woodmen of the World	1	60	22.50
D - Knights of Columbus	2	136	83.10
Finnish Relief	5	600	320.77
Schools	3	77	35.72
Soil Conservation Dist. Supervisors	3	155	48.64
WPA Men (Not paid Labor)	6	171	184.93
Total	248	15,896	\$ 8,105.11

A further analysis of the hunting program reveals that a total of 2,505 square miles was covered. An average of 23 rabbits were bagged per square mile and 232 were taken per hunt. Approximately 40 percent of our existing belts (660 miles) were included in the sections hunted.

We attribute our success in community hunting to the fine cooperation displayed by our sponsoring groups and agencies. Our instructions were well accepted and followed with the result that no serious accidents were experienced. Many of our cooperators were leaders for the various sponsoring agencies and spent much time and effort in properly organizing hunts. The cost to the Government of carrying out an effective community hunting campaign amounted to slightly more than 1/5 cent per acre or \$1.28 per section. To accomplish the same amount of work with paid labor would have necessitated a total cost of \$40,000 or more than \$16 per section.

Our accomplishment cannot be based alone on the fact that 57,903 rabbits were killed, thereby alleviating a good deal of damage to trees and crops, but we must consider that the offspring could easily have amounted to well over 200,000 had this control program not been carried out. Without question the benefits reaped far surpass the time and expense necessary for a successful campaign.

Proceeds from sale of rabbits were or will be used by sponsoring agencies for many worth-while purposes. Worthy of mention are examples such as the following: Conservation measures (feeding wildlife during winter months, stocking shelterbelts with Hungarian partridge), donations to charity, social gatherings, improving golf greens and fairways, buying baseball uniforms and improving playing diamonds, recreation activities for 4-H Clubs and community clubs, summer playground equipment for schools, purchase of new books for public libraries, beautifying city parks and playgrounds and Finnish relief.

It is also worthy of mention that proceeds from rabbits helped supply basketball uniforms for a high school team recently semi-finalists in Class B tournament competition, now South Dakota's leading basketball tournament.

Community hunts have not only benefited South Dakota in its rodent control program but also from a public relations standpoint. We have so advertised ourselves on the hunts that many new friends have been made for the Project. Many applications for belts have been received through this PR medium and some of those applications have now attached to them a co-operative agreement, signed and delivered, for a 1940 planting.

- B. O. Wichmann, S.Dak.

KANSAS SHELTERBELT FAMILY INCREASED BY ONE

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dellberg announce the birth of their daughter, Diane Kay, at the Kingman Memorial hospital on Tuesday, February 27. The baby weighed six pounds, seven ounces at birth.

KANSAS EMPLOYEE HAS NEW "SPARKLER"

Mary Mullen, senior stenographer, was the center of an admiring huddle of State Office personnel upon her return from an Easter vacation. The gaze of all was fixed on a sparkling gem reposing on the left hand. The source, as we suspected, was one Melvin Dodd, Manager of the Dodd Electric Company of Manhattan. Congratulations, Melvin.

- J. D. Hall, Kans.

SOURCE OF SEED NEEDS CLOSE SCRUTINY

The policies of the Prairie States Forestry Project pertaining to seed sources and transfer of planting stock are among those of first importance. As the work progresses, it becomes necessary to adhere more closely to those policies which are set up as ideals.

Provenience must be considered from two major points of view. First, the genetic characteristics of the parent as to form, longevity, etc., and second, the characteristics which have been built up through natural selection which enables it to survive under conditions which are generally considered adverse. A specific example may serve to make these points more clear. Hackberry of excellent form, large size, and great age can be found in bottom lands in the eastern part of the Plains region. If only form were considered this would be an excellent seed source, but we have no assurance that there have been bred into these trees characteristics which will make their progeny adaptable to the marginal conditions they will meet in our shelterbelt plantings. Likelihood of the failure under dry land conditions is much greater. On the other hand, hackberry of fair form and moderate height and longevity are found on many medium upland sites in the central part of the Plains region. They are the trees to furnish progeny with characteristics which our plantings demand, fair form, moderate heights and longevity, coupled with the ability to thrive under marginal climatic and soil conditions. On strictly dry upland sites and tops of dunes will be found trees which are scrubby but very tenacious of life, but most often the scrubbyness is more the product of environment than heredity and under more favorable conditions their progeny will develop into well-formed trees.

Site, therefore, is more important than individual trees in seed source selection and a good rule for securing the desired stock is to collect seed from the best trees on the sites most nearly approaching the conditions our plantings must meet, rather than collecting seed from trees on the best sites.

To assure reliability of our seed sources, we must first of all define the desirable tree form and then define the best seed collection sites. Then an adequately trained man should examine not only the proposed seed collection sites but also the individual trees from which seed is to be taken. This procedure will more nearly assure seed provenience and enable maintenance of seed source records in useable form.

Our expectations that in time our plantings would furnish the seed we need would be realized if we had done our work perfectly, but since we have not, we can not expect our plantings through 1940 to be better seed sources than other existent sources except to the very slight extent that five years of natural selection could have improved it.

We must approach the problem from a slightly different angle than formerly. Seed farming can be easily followed in our shelterbelts and is the ideal way to bring about improvement of stock. In years of abundant seed crops, when collectors can afford to be "choosy," we can make great strides in seed source improvement. If, for example, the 1940 crop of hackberry seed should be abundant we can be more particular in selection of sites and trees from which to gather seed, and also adhere more closely to

the limitations set up to govern the transfer of seed and stock grown from it. Stock from that seed would be largely planted in 1942 shelterbelts, and therefore 1942 shelterbelts would be designated as "seed farms" for hackberry to furnish seed of improved quality when the trees become bearers.

Solution of the seed source problems will be of no avail, however, unless the progeny are established under conditions similar to those to which the parents are accustomed. In other words, distant transfers of seed or stock should be avoided so that environment will not undo the work of careful seed collection. A series of periodic habits has been developed in the parent stock which has enabled it to survive and attain good form and these characteristics are handed down through the seed. Changes in length of day, length of growing season, frequency of drought periods, etc., to which planting stock is subjected through distant transfers would lessen chances of retaining parental form characteristics and reduce the chances of survival, longevity, etc., because its phenological responses, which are hereditary, do not match climatic periodicity.

Because of the pressure of administrative difficulties, we have frequently had to overstep seed zone boundaries, but for best results the movement of progeny from the site of the parent should not exceed 100 miles in latitude or longitude or 1000 feet in altitude. To some extent altitude will compensate for latitudinal movement and vice versa, but these limitations are those set up in a recent forest seed zoning policy approved by the Secretary of Agriculture. Collection of seed surpluses, careful planning for the needs of a given area for planting stock, and balanced nursery production will eliminate the need for distant transfers of stock or seed.

- Alba H. Briggs, R.O.

THAT TM STUDY COURSE

The course in Timber Management has revealed a surprising fund of humor among our personnel. Some of the amusing statements undoubtedly were made wittingly, but some of them, I suspect, were not intended to be humorous.

One Nebraskan evidently vented his wrath on the "perfessor" by mailing his papers with too little postage. Three cents were not enough to tote a set of exam questions and someone was nicked for the postage due, but it wasn't the "perfessor."

Limitations on the lengths of the answers to some of the questions brought frequent objections, but one of sunny Texas' bright youngsters met the limitation quite simply. In answer to the question, "Modification of planting standards to meet the desires of farmers results in what?" he replied laconically, "chaos."

"Red" Meines, fair flower of Nebraska, attached a note to one examination paper inquiring "if that Taylor guy knows any numbers above 8." Seems that "Red's" returned exams wouldn't indicate that I did know any larger numbers, but on the next exam Meines made a perfect score.

This answer isn't so dumb. One of the men declared that if he couldn't remedy the "staggering" or offsetting of trees within a row by any other method, he would resort to a halter and lead rope.

The reply by Yearsley of Oklahoma to Question IV, Exam. No. 5, was that if he found a planting foreman who was letting that many faults get by, he would speedily acquire a new foreman.

The replant problem in Exam. No. 5 caused many hairs to gray and occasioned no little surprise. One Subdistrict Officer wanted to know whose bright idea it was and where one would find a shelterbelt even remotely resembling the problem. (His language was more forceful than I quote.) Actually the prototype of that problem was submitted by another man in the inquiring officer's state.

Someone stated that "accession numbers serve as a parentage of planting stock," whereupon Hal Swim suggested that we cross accession numbers with rabbits and get galloping shelterbelts, figuring, I suppose, that they could run from erosion point to erosion point.

And from the deep South came this aria on cultivation: "This activity should be the theme song played continuously throughout the symphony of all other phases of the Project, and rise to the crescendo at the conclusion of planting."

Again from the South (I believe the Southerners have a better sense of humor than the Northerners) comes a revelation. Among the answers to what factors govern the inception of cultivation I find "some according to the almanac or divine manifestation."

- K. W. Taylor, N.Dak.

DICTAPHONE ACCOMPANIES AUDITOR

Audit reports via dictaphone while in travel status was the essence of an article by Banff Young, R.O., in an issue of PLAINS FORESTER sometime ago.

I am thoroughly sold on the idea after a rather thorough trial. During the period January 15 to 30, I audited the offices of three districts and the state garage. In addition, one day each was spent inspecting three subdistrict offices, reports of which were prepared by district clerks. The dictaphone was kept in a hotel room, and reports were dictated currently as the audits progressed. By the time the audits were completed, all but a part of the last report had been dictated.

The chief advantages of the above procedure are: (1) Audits can be conducted more rapidly inasmuch as notes do not need to be taken as fully as if preparation of the report were to be delayed until after the completion of a series of audits; (2) reports can be submitted to the offices audited sooner than if prepared on return to official station; (3) upon return to headquarters attention can be given more promptly to matters other than report preparation which usually accumulate in the office during the absence of the auditor; and (4) the job of typing reports can be spread out to a better advantage to all concerned. Incidentally, in connection with (4) above, dictaphone records covering the first two audits mentioned above were sent to the State Office soon after the first two audits were completed. These were typed in final form before I arrived at my official station. Copies of these reports were sent promptly to the field. Copies of remaining reports were submitted to the offices audited within a week following the close of the last audit.

While it is true that, in a series of audits, conclusions reached and recommendations made in earlier reports may need modification because of information obtained subsequently, this problem can be met quite satisfactorily by placing appropriate footnotes on pages of the report needing modification or, if necessary, by a supplemental statement attached at the close of the report.

Despite the extra luggage required and considerable overtime necessitated in case no extra time is allotted for completing reports in the field, there is considerable satisfaction in having reports "in the bag" when arriving at official station. Although the bell boy is sure to say, "What ya got in there?" when he "hefts" the leaden package containing the dictaphone mechanism and the hotel manager is certain to beam with the hope that you've come for an extended stay when he sees the two or three extra cylinder-filled cartons, everything can be explained in due season.

Thanks, Banff, for a good idea.

- J. D. Hall, Kans.

BUSINESS WEEK TELLS ABOUT SHELTERBELTS

The Prairie States Forestry Project received a valuable bit of publicity in the April 6 issue of Business Week, an important national magazine. The article, "The Shelterbelt Comes True," is a moderate, factual presentation of the work of the PSFP and is illustrated by a picture of a township tree committee at work, a picture of a two-year-old shelterbelt near St. John, Kansas, a diagram showing the arrangement of the trees and telling the species most commonly used, and a map showing the planting districts in the six states.

This story is the result of one of Kansas' personnel becoming acquainted with a writer for national publications and interesting him in the Project. As a result, we have obtained recognition from one of the Nation's leading business publications.

- H. J. Swan, R.O.

PHOTOGRAPHING WILDLIFE IS FUN, BUT IT'S WORK, TOO

"Look at the birdie, please" doesn't apply in this case for it was the birdie posing for the picture. Carroll Elliott, editor of the Mangum Star, and I went after the pictures last June and July. Since Carroll possessed the only camera hereabouts which was suitable for the job, it was necessary to sell him the idea because it meant spending three or four hours at a time in the sunlit open with the temperature ranging from 100 to 108.

We found the mockingbird the best photographic subject, since it is the most courageous of all birds nesting in Oklahoma shelterbelts. The mockingbird will fight a cat or dog and will valiantly bluff a man to protect its young. A camera 30 inches from the nest, however, was almost too much for even this courageous individual, so it was necessary to set up a dummy camera for two or three days. For this we used a cigar box which we moved a few inches closer to the nest each day until the bird became accustomed to it and flew to her nest even though she was suspicious and thought it might be a hawk or an owl. This solved the problem of getting the camera focused and it was then necessary to contrive a way to release the shutter

from a distance of 100 feet at exactly the right time. We secured an 8-foot shutter release, which was dropped to the ground and fastened to a wooden vise, and some fine wire. The vise was anchored to steel posts driven in the ground.

Besides feeding the little fellows, the mother bird performs several other duties every time she visits a nest. She must pick the ants off the youngsters and clean out the nest. We got some of the best snaps while she attended to these other duties.

The American cuckoo, or rain crow, which we tried to photograph, was so shy that she refused to approach the nest when we were around, and threatened to abandon it unless we took the camera and moved out. We took a picture of the eggs and gave up. At another place we found a chaparral nest and a field sparrow nest only a few feet apart. The young chaparral were ready to leave the nest and did not wish to pose for a picture. We took a flash picture, which would have been fine had we not failed to notice a small leaf near the camera. We could only hope for better luck next time.

A quail became so gentle, after several days of careful work on our part, that we could walk up to the nest and almost touch her without frightening her away. She was not a good subject, though, because she disregarded instructions not to look at the camera. Next year we will catch her as she approaches the nest, and get a full view of the nest and the bird.

Henceforth when a sage says photographing wildlife is a difficult art, I'll not argue. It's not fun to sit quietly on the ground for 40 minutes or possibly an hour, with the sun shining directly on one, waiting for the opportune time to snap a picture. A bird will come to her nest if one moves around, but she will be nervous and excited and not a good subject. Wildlife photography is interesting, and Elliott and I anticipate better success next summer.

- Howard Carleton, Jr., Okla.

WHEE-EE! THE TEXAS GANG JAMBOREES!

Some fifty bamboozlin' truckers from Texas and their northern guests put on their one clean shirt, picked up their gals, and traipsed to the Vernon Country Club for a high old time. Those Detailers from the Frozen No'th were given an opportunity to meet the rest of the Texas gang and show what they could do to kick up some high-falutin', fantastical steps. With music furnished by Nick Lodeon and his variety entertainers, they sure kicked high, wide and handsome.

High Lites included Ross Evenstad's jitterbugging, Dick Lassen's approval of Ross' blonde gal friend, those foundation crashes by Jules Vogel, Hy Goldberg and Homer Sloan, Davy's blissful hilarity, Roy B. M. Moose-calls, Jules' jovial "silent" humor, Billie & Maggie taking in all the dances and dancing down all the men, C.M.A. having a swell time, Walt Webb stepping in fancy fashion after getting those corner conferences out of his system, a pair of red slippers, - etc., etc., etc. It took the coo-coo clock to pound and pound to wind up the Texas jamboree.

SATISFIED CUSTOMERS ARE OUR BEST ADVERTISEMENT

In checking over our negotiation record we find that many of our old customers are so well satisfied with their shelterbelts, they had new belts planted on their farms this year.

In Pratt and Stafford Counties, where we have been operating since 1935, among this year's cooperators 25% and 31%, respectively, are old co-operators. In Barton and Russell Counties, where we have made plantings since 1936, the percent of old cooperators among this year's is 24% and 50%. For the four counties the average is 32%, which shows that nearly one-third of our old cooperators are well enough pleased with their belts to want more. Of the other two-thirds, most have what they need for protection or all that they can care for at this time.

It would be interesting if some of the other Districts in the region would write on this so that we might get a picture of how the average runs throughout the six states.

- Glenn W. Spring, Kans.

PSFP LAND-PLANNING WORK IS PRAISED

In the foreword to a recently mimeographed report on the progress of land-use planning during 1939, issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Extension Service, a fine tribute is paid to the PSFP by Lyall E. Peterson, acting chief of the Forest Land Planning Unit. Mr. Peterson wrote:

"The participation in county planning by foresters of the Prairie States Forestry Project, is probably the outstanding example of fruitful effort. In these states the Forest Service has been using the land classification maps developed by local committees to guide them in selecting areas for planting. They have in turn been in position to offer the local committees a wealth of advice with regards to the advantages and possibilities of shelterbelt plantings. In many other states and counties the Forest Service is finding added support for the national forest acquisition program."

- H. J. Swan, R.O.

CUPID STRIKES AGAIN

Out here in Oklahoma matchmaking is synonymous with Jim Kyle, for his prediction that any single person working in his district doesn't remain in that state for more than four months after he starts working on them usually comes true. Well, it took a few months longer in the case of Earl Kissick, former Junior Clerk in Jim's District and now Assistant Clerk in the State Office, but on Sunday, April 7, at 4 P.M. at the Baptist Church in Sayre, Oklahoma, Miss Marie Sutton and Earl were married. Immediately preceding the ceremony Mrs. Steve Harvey sang two very beautiful songs--"Because" and "I Love You Truly."

The bride held up beautifully during the ceremony even when it came time to promise "to obey," but Earl appeared mighty nervous until he got through the last "I do."

After the ceremony the guests proceeded to the bride's home, where delicious refreshments were served. By that time Earl had regained his composure to some extent and was able to partake of a little nourishment.

- Carroll Deal, Okla.

HIGHWAY VISIBILITY QUESTION RAISES ITS HEAD AGAIN

Realization of the danger to vehicles at country crossroads caused by blind approaches is not new in this area. It has been recognized by the people for years with the result that laws have been enacted fixing the responsibility on the townships of keeping corners free from weed growth and hedge rows trimmed. The possibility of shelterbelts obstructing the motorist's view has not yet been thought of by many, but as our belts become older and more numerous this question is sure to arise.

Within the last three months two townships in Reno County, Kansas, have been sued by motorists to cover damages to automobiles caused by collisions at intersections of township roads. In both cases, it was the plaintiff's contention the township was negligent in allowing the intersection approaches to be obscured by weeds. In one case the plaintiff received a judgment against the township and the other case is still awaiting trial.

It will be only a matter of a year or two until the people wake up to the fact that shelterbelts will be as much a source of danger to motorists as weeds or hedge rows. One accident in which the blame is placed on poor visibility due to a shelterbelt will set off the bomb shell that is likely to cause the Project serious criticism and may decrease the farmer's desire for shelterbelts. Since we realize these conditions will confront us in the future, I believe it is up to us to apply the corrective measures now when we plant the trees rather than wait for the various law-making bodies to apply a solution that may not be desirable from the standpoint of land protection.

In a few years when the trees are large the only possible solution will be to remove the belt near the corners which will in part destroy its effectiveness. If we act now we have several better solutions from which to choose, so let's not ignore the problem, but determine the best answer to it and start applying it.

- Wm. V. Catlow, Kans.

PSFP PRESS RELATIONS POLICY GETS EDITORIAL COMPLIMENT

The Hutchinson (Kansas) News of April 6 has a very interesting editorial on the subject of Governmental press relations. Complaining that the tendency is more and more toward centralization of control over local agencies in Washington, the writer goes on to say:

"Tending more than any other one thing, perhaps, to sicken working newspapermen of the Hinterlands against Washington methods is the one-sided censorship which nearly always accompanies the bureaucratic setup.

"First move is an attempt to dry up all the usual sources of information. 'I'm afraid I can't give out that information,' the local federal bureaucrat usually says, particularly if the information sought might not be 100 percent favorable to his agency. He has to take that attitude, because he has his orders.

..... "So much for the brickbats. Now for a bouquet. Proof that federal agencies are not necessarily that way is the U. S. Forest Service, engaged in planting millions of trees as midwest shelterbelts. Maybe it's because the service is old enough to have outgrown the jitters, or because it is organized on a civil service basis, with an able personnel.

"Anyway, the men of the Forest Service can and will answer questions without telephoning Washington. From the boss down to the stenographers they seem to be without the keep-it-dark complex. They have the information and it's yours for the asking. Could that be just one minor reason why the shelterbelt project has sold itself so completely to the people it touches, while many of the other federal agencies have incurred only hostility and distrust?"

- E. L. Perry, R.O.

THIS HAPPENS SOMETIMES.

The enclosed copy of a clipping from the Plainview Evening Herald covering a news item from Wichita, Kansas, has put such a strain on our credulity that we are requesting definite advice as to its authenticity.

If Mr. Crawford has found a means whereby pecan trees produce a harvest within one year, we would be greatly interested in knowing the methods used.

"WICHITA, Kans. (AP) - Remember the shelterbelt plan? The trees were to help break the wind and thus reduce erosion.

"In Sedgwick county a shelterbelt was planted two years ago with several hundred seedlings.

"Now there is a forest there, more than 40 miles long and 100 feet wide. Pecans were harvested last year from some trees planted in 1938.

"Families liked the plan so well they have contracted to plant an additional 50 miles of trees in 1940, says M. E. Crawford of the forest service."

- Texas

WHO KNOWS HIS CATALPAS?

Apparently everyone agrees that the hardy Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) is much to be preferred over the common Catalpa (*Catalpa bignonioides*). Various reasons are given: "bigger and better tree, makes better posts, stronger wood, etc." Whenever an inspector steams through the country he invariably will point out the large Catalpa trees as *Catalpa speciosa*, sometimes when every indication is that they are the common Catalpa. It is generally assumed that all scrubby specimens are the common Catalpa.

Some time ago our curiosity was aroused and we asked the Washington Office of the Forest Service to send all available literature on Catalpa -- both state and federal bulletins. This literature surprised us. Practically all had been printed during the hardy Catalpa "boom days," and everyone was urged to plant "*Catalpa speciosa*." This could be likened to the Norway Poplar "Boom" in Nebraska about 15 years ago and to the present Chinese Elm "boom" throughout the Plains region. It is notable that none of the bulletins was based on actual research data.

Every time we hear someone laud the hardy Catalpa, we ask upon what the statements are based, hoping to uncover something. To date few have been able to justify opinions of the two Catalpas by their own experience.

We believe that generally the hardy Catalpa may be considered to be a larger tree, but can it be considered a better tree? Several farmers have volunteered the information that the common Catalpa is better than the hardy variety because the posts are more durable. These few based their opinions on experience with both kinds. It seems that since the most rapid-growing

hardwoods usually have the weakest and least durable wood (Cottonwood - Chinese Elm) there might be room for discussion on this matter. Let's hear from someone who has had actual experience with both species of Catalpa -- we would like to learn more about them, especially since Catalpa by the millions will be set out in plantings on this Project in the next few years.

- Karl F. Ziegler, Kans.

FROM THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

State Director A. L. Ford has a title now. The Informer, publication of the Brookings (S.Dak.) Chamber of Commerce, recently referred to him as "King of the Forest."

Occasionally a person asks in a few words a question which would require a dissertation on the sum of accumulated forestry knowledge to answer. Such a question was propounded by a North Dakotan in a letter to the Regional Office. The request: "Please send me some information on how, when, where and what to do in case plants or trees dy." Of course, bowing to the State's prerogative, we permitted North Dakota to reply since the query originated there.

Add annoying interruptions. Subdistrict Officer L. A. Rickel of Nebraska, was manfully expounding on "Prairie States Forestry Project Organization and Shelterbelt Structure" for the benefit of 60 students in the Kearney State Teachers College biology class, March 5, when his talk was rudely terminated by a surprise fire drill.

DISTRICT TO GET NEW OFFICES

Present plans provide for housing the Hutchinson district office in the new \$310,000 Post Office building, scheduled for completion about July 1, 1940, Karl F. Ziegler, district officer reports. The Forest Service will be allotted three rooms consisting of a total of approximately 650 square feet of floor space.

- J. D. Hall, Kans.

PERFECTLY SIMPLE

The way to have teeth with which you can crack nuts is to refrain from cracking nuts with your teeth.

The way to have a stomach in which you can put practically any kind of food is to refrain from putting practically any kind of food into your stomach.

The way to have eyes with which you can read fine print in a poor light is to refrain from reading fine print in a poor light.

The way to have friends who would give you the shirt off their respective backs is to refrain from asking them for their shirts.

The way to make friends with a traffic cop so that he will overlook slight infractions of the traffic rules is to avoid slight infractions of the traffic rules.

- The Transmitter.